

**CLAIMS**

I claim:

1. A severe weather alert system comprising:  
a severe weather detector configured to detect a severe weather condition;  
a radio frequency (RF) transmitter in communication with the severe weather detector, the RF transmitter configured to receive a signal from the severe weather detector and transmit a corresponding signal via RF electromagnetic waves; and  
a smoke detector having an RF receiver configured to receive the RF signal transmitted from the RF transmitter, the smoke detector further including circuitry to control a sound emanating device to emit a unique sound to indicate a severe weather condition.
2. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the severe weather detector is a meteorological weather center.
3. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the severe weather detector is a human.
4. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the severe weather detector is a weather gauge.

5. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the RF transmitter is in communication with the severe weather detector via a public switched telephone network (PSTN).

6. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the RF transmitter is in communication with the severe weather detector via a wide area computer network.

7. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the RF transmitter is in communication with the severe weather detector via a cellular link.

8. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the RF transmitter is in communication with the severe weather detector via a RF link.

9. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the smoke detector further includes discriminator circuitry configured to determine whether the received RF signal is destined for the smoke detector.

10. The severe weather alert system of claim 9, wherein the discriminator circuitry is configured to verify that an address associated with the received RF signal is a preconfigured address associated with the smoke detector.

11. The severe weather alert system of claim 9, wherein the smoke detector further includes an RF transmitter for relaying the received RF signal.

12. The severe weather alert system of claim 11, wherein the RF transmitter of the smoke detector is configured to relay the received RF signal if the discriminator circuitry determines that the received RF signal is not destined for the smoke detector.

13. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the smoke detector further includes a sound control mechanism configured to control the sound emitted from the sound emanating device.

14. The severe weather alert system of claim 13, wherein the buzzer control mechanism is configured to control the sound emanating device to emit a sound that is distinct from the sound emitted from the smoke detector when signaling a smoke detector.

15. The severe weather alert system of claim 13, further including a second sound emanating device, wherein the second sound emanating device is controlled by conventional smoke detector circuitry.

16. The severe weather alert system of claim 1, wherein the sound emanating device is a piezoelectric buzzer.

17. A method for signaling a severe weather condition comprising the steps of:

determining that a severe weather condition exists;

transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal containing information about the severe weather condition;

receiving the RF signal with a RF receiver disposed in a smoke detector; and

sounding a buzzer of the smoke detector in response to receiving the RF signal.

18. The method of claim 17, further including the step of communicating a signal indicative of a severe weather condition to the RF transmitter.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of communicating a signal includes communicating the signal across a public switched telephone network (PSTN).

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of communicating a signal includes communicating the signal across a cellular link.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of communicating a signal includes communicating the signal across a wide area computer network.

22. The method of claim 17, further including the step of determining whether the received RF signal is destined for the smoke detector.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the step of sounding the buzzer is performed only if the determining step determines that the received RF signal is destined for the smoke detector.

24. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of sounding the buzzer sounds the buzzer to emit a sound different than the buzzer emits when sounding a smoke detector.

25. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of determining that a severe weather condition exists includes forecasting a severe weather condition.

26. A method for signaling a weather condition comprising the steps of:  
determining that a weather condition exists;  
transmitting a radio frequency (RF) signal containing information about the weather condition;  
receiving the RF signal with a RF receiver disposed in a smoke detector;  
causing a device to emit an audible sound in response to receiving the RF signal.

27. A system for signaling a weather condition comprising:

means for detecting a weather condition;

a wireless transmitter in communication with the means for detecting a weather condition, the wireless transmitter configured to receive a signal from the means for detecting a weather condition and transmit a corresponding signal via electromagnetic waves;

a receiver remotely located from the wireless transmitter, the receiver configured to receive the electromagnetic signal transmitted from the smoke detector;

a sound emanating device; and

sound control means for controlling the sound emanating device, the sound control means being responsive to the electromagnetic signal received by the receiver.

28. The severe weather alert system of claim 27, wherein the receiver is disposed inside a smoke detector.

29. The severe weather alert system of claim 27, wherein the sound control means includes circuitry configured to output a signal that is input to the sound control device.

30. The severe weather alert system of claim 27, wherein the wireless transmitter is an RF transmitter.

31. A smoke detector, the improvement comprising an integrated radio frequency receiver for receiving message packets containing information that may be conveyed through a sound emanating device associated with the smoke detector.

32. A smoke detector comprising:  
a radio frequency (RF) receiver configured to receive an RF signal that is encoded to include information about a weather condition;  
a sound emanating device; and  
sound control means for controlling the output of the sound emanating device in response to the received RF signal.

33. The smoke detector of claim 32, further including discrimination means for evaluating the received RF signal and determining whether the RF signal is destined for the smoke detector.

34. The smoke detector of claim 32, further including a decoder that is configured to decode the encoded RF signal and determine the weather condition.

35. The smoke detector of claim 32, wherein the sound control means is configured to cause the sound emanating device to emit differing sounds, depending upon the contents of the received RF signal.

36. The smoke detector of claim 34, wherein the sound control means is responsive to the decoder.

37. The smoke detector of claim 32, wherein the sound control means is configured to cause the smoke detector to emit differing sounds for differing decoded weather conditions, the differing decoded weather conditions including at least one selected from the group consisting of: a tornado watch, a tornado warning, a severe thunderstorm watch, a severe thunderstorm warning, a flash flood watch and a flash flood warning.

38. The smoke detector of claim 32, wherein the sound emanating device is a piezoelectric buzzer.

39. The smoke detector of claim 32, wherein the sound emanating device is shared with conventional smoke detection circuitry of the smoke detector.